

**In the Specification:**

Kindly amend the abstract as follows:

[The disclosed concept provides an external protection system for a vehicle [and more particularly, for a lightweight vehicle, producing the same protection level for its occupants as that of a much heavier vehicle. The integrated design of the system provides impact, rollover and crash protection for front, side and rear impact while maximizing the aerodynamic advantage of the vehicle relative to the protection volume and level of protection provided to the vehicles' occupants.] An external protection system for a vehicle includes a plurality of external guards in communication with a passenger compartment. The plurality of guards are spaced a distance away from the passenger compartment such that a crush zone exists between each of the plurality of guards and the passenger compartment. This provides a lightweight vehicle with an increased level of protection.